

What is claimed is:

1. A media distribution apparatus comprising:

a storage section that stores a plurality of contents,
a plurality of media of different forms provided for each
5 said content, and a predetermined charge that is charged
when said media are distributed;

a request receiving section that receives a
distribution request for said content composed of
identification information that identifies said content
10 and form information relating to said form of said media,
sent from a client;

a request analysis section that analyzes said
distribution request and identifies said content and said
form of said media for which said client requests
15 distribution;

a media selecting section that selects distribution
request media corresponding to identified said content
and said form of said media from said storage section;

a media transmitting section that transmits said
20 distribution request media to said client; and

a charging section that charges said client said
predetermined charge corresponding to said distribution
request media at the time of distribution of said
distribution request media.

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2. The apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein said storage section stores, for each of

said plurality of contents, content management information that is metadata that manages said plurality of media and said predetermined charge corresponding to said media by maintaining correspondence therebetween;
5 and said media distribution apparatus identifies said content and said form of said media from said distribution request using said content management information, and also identifies said predetermined charge corresponding to said distribution request media.

10 3. The apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein said plurality of media have different charge systems.

15 4. The apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein said plurality of media are composed of broadband media that are views of said content for broadband communication, and narrowband media that are said views for narrowband communication; and said media
20 distribution apparatus selects and distributes said broadband media or said narrowband media in accordance with client terminal communication capability information sent from said client.

25 5. The apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein said charging section performs charging after receiving information to the effect that playback of said

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distribution request media has been performed from said client.

6. The apparatus according to claim 2, further
5 comprising a list information transmitting section that generates list information of said plurality of contents from said content management information and sends the generated said list to said client.

10 7. The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said plurality of media are composed of a view of said content and a preview that is advance information of said view and that is free-of-charge.

15 8. The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said plurality of media are composed of a view of said content and advertising media that are advertising material of said content and for which a predetermined payback charge is set for distribution.

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9. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said predetermined charge of said narrowband media is set lower than said predetermined charge of said broadband media.

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10. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said plurality of media are composed of color

media that are views of said content made up of color data, and black-and-white media that are said views made up of binary data and for which said predetermined charge is set lower than for said color media.

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11. The apparatus according to claim 6,
 wherein said charging section changes a
 predetermined charge to be charged when said media are
 distributed according to a time from a point at which
 10 said list information transmitting section transmits said
 list information until said request receiving section
 receives said content distribution request sent from said
 client.

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12. The apparatus according to claim 6,
 wherein said charging section changes a
 predetermined charge to be charged when said view is
 distributed according to a time from a point at which
 said media transmitting section transmits said preview
 20 to said client until said request receiving section
 receives a distribution request for said view from said
 client.

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13. A media distribution apparatus comprising:
 a storage section that stores a plurality of contents,
 media provided for each said content, conversion
 information for converting said media to media of a

different form, and a predetermined charge that is charged when said media and media converted using said conversion information are distributed;

5 a request receiving section that receives a distribution request for said content composed of identification information that identifies said content and form information indicating a form of said media, sent from a client;

10 a request analysis section that analyzes said distribution request and identifies said content and said form of said media for which said client requests distribution;

15 a media selecting section that, when distribution request media corresponding to identified said content and said form are in said storage section, selects said distribution request media from said storage section;

20 a media converting section that, when said distribution request media are not in said storage section, converts said media stored in said storage section to said distribution request media using said conversion information;

a media transmitting section that transmits said distribution request media to said client; and

25 a charging section that charges said client said predetermined charge corresponding to said distribution request media at the time of distribution of said distribution request media.

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14. The apparatus according to claim 13,

wherein said media distribution apparatus holds in said storage section said media of different forms converted from predetermined said media using said conversion information, and when said distribution request media are said media of a different form held in said storage section, selects said held said media of a different form from said storage section.

15. The apparatus according to claim 13,

wherein said storage section stores, for each of said plurality of contents, content management information that is metadata that manages said media, said conversion information, and said predetermined charge corresponding to said media of a different form converted using said media and said conversion information by maintaining correspondence therebetween; and said media distribution apparatus identifies said content and the form of that media from said distribution request using said content management information, and also identifies said predetermined charge corresponding to said media and said media of a different form.

16. The apparatus according to any one of claim 13,

wherein said media have a different charge system from media converted using said conversion information.

17. The apparatus according to claim 13,
wherein said media are broadband media that are views
of said content for broadband communication; and said
conversion information is information that converts said
5 broadband media to narrowband media that are said views
for narrowband communication, and converts said broadband
media to said narrowband media in accordance with client
terminal communication capability information sent from
said client.

10 18. The apparatus according to claim 13,
wherein said charging section performs charging
after receiving information to the effect that playback
of said distribution request media has been performed
15 from said client.

19. The apparatus according to claim 15, further
comprising a list information transmitting section that
generates list information of said plurality of contents
20 from said content management information and sends said
list information to said client.

20. The apparatus according to claim 16,
wherein said media are views of said content, and said
25 conversion information is information that converts a
said view to a preview that is advance information of
said view, and said predetermined charge of said view

is no charge.

21. The apparatus according to claim 16,
wherein said media are color media that are views of said
5 content composed of color data; and said conversion
information is information that converts said color media
to said black-and-white media composed of binary data,
or thinned-out media in which frames are thinned out from
said color media, or text media composed of text.

22. The apparatus according to claim 16,
wherein said conversion information is metadata relating
to said content.

23. The apparatus according to claim 20,
wherein said charging section changes a
predetermined charge to be charged when said view is
distributed according to a time from a point at which
said media transmitting section transmits said preview
20 to said client until said request receiving section
receives a distribution request for said view from said
client.

24. A media distribution apparatus comprising:
25 media of a plurality of content and a predetermined
charge to be charged when said media are distributed;
a storage section that stores viewpoint information

sent from a client;

a request analysis section that identifies said media corresponding to said viewpoint information;

a media selecting section that selects identified
5 said media from said storage section;

a media transmitting section that transmits said media to said client; and

a charging section that charges said client said predetermined charge corresponding to said media at the
10 time of distribution of said media.

25. The apparatus according to claim 23,

wherein said storage section stores advertising media and payback charge information for when said
15 advertising media are distributed; and said media distribution apparatus, when information that approves sending of said advertising media is sent from said client, sends said media to said client with said advertising media added thereto, and also performs payback
20 corresponding to sent said advertising media.

26. The apparatus according to claim 24,

wherein said media distribution apparatus sends to said client charging information composed of balance
25 information regarding an amount of money pooled in advance by said client and predetermined charge information applying when said media corresponding to said viewpoint

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and said media are distributed, and based on information specifying said media sent from said client after sending of said charging information, sends corresponding said media to said client.

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27. The apparatus according to claim 26,

wherein said media distribution apparatus does not perform distribution of said media when said client requests said media with a price higher than said balance information.

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28. A media distribution apparatus comprising:

a storage section that stores media of a plurality of contents, conversion information for converting said media to media of a different form, predetermined charge information that is charged when media converted using said conversion information are distributed, and viewpoint information sent from a client;

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a request analysis section that identifies said media and said conversion information corresponding to said viewpoint information;

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a media converting section that converts said media to a summary corresponding to said viewpoint of said media using identified said media and said conversion information;

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a media transmitting section that transmits said summary to said client; and

a charging section that charges said client a predetermined charge included in said predetermined charge information corresponding to said summary at the time of distribution of said summary.

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29. The apparatus according to claim 28,

wherein said media distribution apparatus sends to said client charging information composed of balance information regarding an amount of money pooled in advance by said client and predetermined charge information applying when said summary corresponding to said viewpoint is distributed, and based on information specifying said summary sent from said client after sending of said charging information, sends said summary to said client.

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30. The apparatus according to claim 29,

wherein, when said client requests said summary with a price higher than said balance information, said media distribution apparatus creates, and sends to said client, a summary of a length of time that allows sending according to said balance information.

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31. A media distribution system comprising:

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a media distribution apparatus according to claim 1, and a client terminal connected to said media distribution apparatus via a network;

wherein said distribution request is transmitted from said client terminal to said media distribution apparatus, said media distribution apparatus receives said distribution request transmitted from said client terminal, and said distribution request media are transmitted to said client terminal.

32. A media distribution system comprising:

a media distribution apparatus according to claim 13, and a client terminal connected to said media distribution apparatus via a network;

wherein said distribution request is transmitted from said client terminal to said media distribution apparatus, said media distribution apparatus receives said distribution request transmitted from said client terminal, and said distribution request media are transmitted to said client terminal.

33. A media distribution system comprising:

a media distribution apparatus according to claim 24, and a client terminal connected to said media distribution apparatus via a network;

wherein said distribution request is transmitted from said client terminal to said media distribution apparatus, said media distribution apparatus receives said distribution request transmitted from said client terminal, and said distribution request media are

transmitted to said client terminal.

34. A media distribution system comprising:

5 a media distribution apparatus according to claim 28, and a client terminal connected to said media distribution apparatus via a network;

10 wherein said distribution request is transmitted from said client terminal to said media distribution apparatus, said media distribution apparatus receives said distribution request transmitted from said client terminal, and said distribution request media are transmitted to said client terminal.

35. A program that causes a computer to perform:

15 analyzing content distribution request information composed of identification information identifying said content and identification information identifying a media form, sent from a client, and identifying said content and the corresponding media form for which said client requests distribution;

20 selecting from a storage section that stores a plurality of contents, a plurality of media of different forms for each said content, and a predetermined charge that is charged at the time of distribution of said media, 25 distribution request media corresponding to identified said content and said form;

transmitting said distribution request media to

said client; and

charging said client said predetermined charge corresponding to said distribution request media at the time of distribution of said distribution request media.

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36. A program that causes a computer to perform:

analyzing content distribution request information composed of identification information identifying said content and form information identifying a media form, sent from a client, and identifying said content and the corresponding media form for which said client requests distribution;

when distribution request media corresponding to identified said content and said form are in a storage section that stores a plurality of contents, and for each said content, media, conversion information for converting said media to media of a different form, and a predetermined charge that is charged when transmitting media converted using said media and said conversion information, selecting said distribution request media from said storage section;

when said distribution request media are not in said storage section, converting said media stored in said storage section to said distribution request media using said conversion information;

transmitting said distribution request media to said client; and

charging said client said predetermined charge corresponding to said distribution request media at the time of distribution of said distribution request media.

- 5 37. A program that causes a computer to perform:
receiving list information that provides
correspondence between a plurality of contents, and for
each said content a plurality of media of different forms,
and a predetermined charge charged at the time of
10 distribution of said media;
displaying said list information;
transmitting distribution request of said content
composed of identification information identifying said
content and form information identifying a form of said
15 media, input by referring to said list information;
receiving distribution request media composed of
said content and said form corresponding to a transmitted
said distribution request; and
playing back said distribution request media.

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38. A media distribution method comprising:
analyzing content distribution request information
composed of identification information identifying said
content and form information identifying a media form,
25 sent from a client, and identifying said content and the
corresponding media form for which said client requests
distribution;

selecting distribution request media corresponding to identified said content and said form from a storage section that stores a plurality of contents, and for each said content a plurality of media of different forms, and a predetermined charge that is charged when transmitting said media;

transmitting said distribution request media to said client; and

charging said client said predetermined charge corresponding to said distribution request media at the time of distribution of said distribution request media.

39. A media distribution method comprising:

analyzing content distribution request information composed of identification information identifying said content and form information identifying a media form, sent from a client, and identifying said content and the corresponding media form for which said client requests distribution;

when distribution request media corresponding to identified said content and said form are in a storage section that stores a plurality of contents, and for each said content, media, conversion information for converting said media to media of a different form, and a predetermined charge that is charged when transmitting media converted using said media and said conversion information, selecting said distribution request media

when said distribution request media are not in said storage section, converting said media stored in said storage section to said distribution request media using said conversion information;

charging said client said predetermined charge
corresponding to said distribution request media at the
time of distribution of said distribution request media.